

Statewide System of Support for Priority and Focus Schools

2012-2013 Glossary of Terms

Our Schools

Title 1 Priority School

According to the Michigan's 2012 ESEA Waiver, a [Priority School](#) is defined as being one which is among the lowest 5% of public schools in Michigan. Title 1 Priority Schools are identified Priority schools that receive targeted or schoolwide Title 1 funds.

For the 2012/13 school year, **103 Title 1 Priority Schools** have been identified.

Title 1 Focus School

According to the Michigan's 2012 ESEA Waiver, a [Focus School](#) is defined as being one the 10% of public schools in Michigan with the largest Achievement Gaps. Title 1 Focus Schools are identified Focus schools that receive targeted or schoolwide Title 1 funds.

For the 2012/13 school year, **184 Title 1 Focus Schools** have been identified.

Data Tools that Provide Guidance for SSoS

BAA Top-To-Bottom List

The [Top-To-Bottom Ranking \(TTB\) List](#) is used to identify Priority Schools and is provided by the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability (BAA). Through individual student Z Scores, this tool averages each school's Student achievement, Improvement (year-to-year), & Achievement gap. The resulting ranking is used to depict the overall ranking of Michigan's schools and select those in the lowest 5%, statewide. More can be found at www.michigan.gov/ttb.

BAA Focus School Lookup tool

The [Focus School Lookup Tool](#) is provided by the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability (BAA). Through Z scores, this tool averages student scores in Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies, and Writing. The resulting ranking is used to depict the overall achievement gap in Michigan's schools. Focus schools are represented by the highest 10% of the measured achievement gaps, statewide. More in-depth descriptions can be found in the [Focus School FAQ](#).

Top 30%

This is defined as being the group of students at a school in a specific content area, organized by grade level, who represent the highest 30% of scores (MEAP for K-8, MME for H.S.). These students are often not the same for all of the school's content areas. For example, girls may be better at Science than boys, and hence more girls will be in the top 30%. However, if boys score better in Math, then more boys will be in the top 30%. This same process occurs for each content area and each grade

level, such that the “top 30%” in a school represents many different students in many of its grade levels.

Bottom 30%

This is defined as being the group of students at a school in a specific content area, organized by grade level, who represent the lowest 30% of scores (MEAP for K-8, MME for H.S.). As with the top 30%, these students are often not the same for all of the school’s content areas. This same process occurs for each content area and each grade level, such that the “bottom 30%” in a school represents many different students in many of its grade levels.

Michigan State University Partners

Michigan State University (MSU) partners with the Michigan Department of Education to provide supportive services at the district and sometimes the school-level for Title 1 Priority and Focus Schools. As such, there are two primary roles which MSU undertakes with districts and schools.

District Improvement Facilitator (DIF)

The District Improvement Facilitators provide training, monitoring, supervision, and continual skill development at a district level to districts that contain Focus Schools.

DIF (*Level of Interaction*)

The support that is provided is generally limited to up to 40 hours of district level support, contingent upon the number of Focus schools in the district.

Intervention Specialist (IS)

The Intervention Specialists provide training, monitoring, supervision, and continual skill development at a district level to districts that contain Priority Schools and to Priority Schools as well, where needed. The goal of the support provided is to build capacity in each district so that districts provide the highest level of support to Priority Schools.

IS (*Level of Interaction*)

The support that is provided is generally limited to 30-50 days of district and school level support, contingent upon the number of Priority Schools in the district.

Data Dialogue

In 2012-2013, one of the primary roles of the District Improvement Facilitator and the Intervention Specialist is to facilitate a deep awareness and understanding of all relevant student achievement and school improvement data available for each Priority and Focus District and their associated schools. This process is termed as a Data Dialogue, because it is an extended conversation that takes place about each school’s improvement. The Data Dialogues follow a precisely-defined format, [created by Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman](#), using three phases (to Activate/Engage, to Explore/Discover, and to Organize/Integrate).

Content Coach

A Content Coach provides support for the implementation of research-based instructional strategies as described in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The majority of a Content Coach’s time will be spent working

in classrooms with teacher (e.g. modeling, observing, co-teaching.) The coach will play a role in the analysis and utilization of student achievement data to impact instructional decision-making and therefore can be a part of Professional Learning Communities. The focus of a Content Coach's work is to help teachers learn to use data for instructional planning that will have a positive impact on student achievement. The Content Coach's role is non-supervisory. The role of a Content Coach is separate and apart from the evaluative role of the principal or supervisor of the teacher.

School Improvement Framework

Michigan has a framework for continuous school improvement in all of its schools. The framework is research-based and identifies key factors that characterize high performing schools. The framework has five (5) main strands:

- Teaching for learning
- Leadership
- Personnel and professional development
- School and community relations
- Data and information management

The school improvement framework provides a starting point for the extensive process of improvement that is taking place in Priority and Focus Schools, and can serve as a model for other schools as they undergo improvement.

School Improvement Plan (SIP)

Each Priority School must develop and annually update a plan for increasing student achievement and dealing with causal factors that resulted in the school placing in the bottom 5% of Michigan's schools. All major stakeholders in the school have input to this plan. The plan is developed based on a comprehensive needs assessment and incorporates the school improvement support that the MSU Intervention Specialists.

School Improvement Facilitator (SIF)

School Improvement Facilitators (SIFs) provide support, training, monitoring and continual skill development to building leaders and leadership teams in Title I Priority Schools.

School Support Team (SST)

The School Support Team, external to the day-to-day operations of the Priority building, provides objective and expert guidance to carry out the process of school change in Title I Priority buildings. A School Support team is made up of a District Representative, a School Improvement Facilitator, and a District Intervention Specialist.